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L'Évolution Économique et Sociale de l'Industrie de la Laine en Angleterre by Laurent Dechesne; Die staatliche Regelung der englischen Wollindustrie vom xv. bis zum xviii. Jahrhundert. by Friedrich Lohmann

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John Nixon, Pioneer of the Steam Coal Trade in South Wales.

A Memoir. By JAMES EDMUND VINCENT. With a Portrait.
(London : Murray. 1899.)

It was John Nixon who first discerned the merits of the "steam coal" of South Wales, its relative smokelessness, and greater heating power, and who, by taking out at his own risk a cargo to Nantes and convincing the sugar refiners of that place and the French Minister of Marine of its superiority for their purposes, created the foreign demand which has done so much to transform the neighbourhood of Merthyr and Cardiff. This is a story which, well told, would be worth telling; especially now that the English public is beginning seriously to consider whether it is wise to allow "individual enterprise" to freely supply the rivals of England with what are in fact munitions of war. The present eulogy, by dint of heavy paper, large type and wide margins, has been given the outward semblance of a substantial volume: but when the unnecessary verbiage and reflections of the author are omitted, all the facts which it contains could easily have been set forth in a dozen ordinary pages. To judge from internal evidence, the narrative is really composed of Mr. Nixon's own reminiscences, and it has not even occurred to Mr. Vincent to supply the dates which his hero forgot to mention. Readers conversant with the coal mining industry will understand what was involved in Mr. Nixon's introduction of the "long wall system" instead of the "pillar and stall system," but certainly the author does not make it clear to those who are not. And it need hardly be added that the whole account is pitched in the key of admiration. In all his conflicts with other business men or with his own miners, Mr. Nixon was always in the right. As to the more recent events in his career which we should be glad to know about,—his efforts to bring about some control of the output, his scheme for an association among coal owners to fix a minimum price for coal, and finally his support, as Chairman of the Coal Owners' Association, of the Sliding Scale for wages—the information is exceedingly meagre and vague. The book will gratify Mr. Nixon's personal friends; but it is not the contribution to the industrial and commercial history of South Wales which its title would seem to promise.

W. J. ASHLEY

L'Évolution Économique et Sociale de l'Industrie de la Laine en Angleterre. By LAURENT DECHESNE. (Paris : Librairie de la Société des Recueil Général des Lois. 1900. Pp. 282.)

Die staatliche Regelung der englischen Wollindustrie vom xv. bis zum xviii. Jahrhundert. By Dr. FRIEDRICH LOHMANN. In Schmöller's *Forschungen*. xviii, heft 1. (Leipzig : Duncker und Humblot. 1900. Pp. x, 100.)

THE contemporaneous appearance of these two monographs on the history of the English woollen industry shows that foreign economists

are beginning to realise the quite unique position of that manufacture in the social development of Great Britain, and to give it the attention that it deserves. One is by a Belgian scholar, and was presented as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor in Political Economy at the University of Liège: the other has been prepared for the purpose of facilitating one of those general surveys which it is the wise policy of the editors of the *Acta Borussica* to prefix to the several volumes of the legislation of Frederick II. It is understood that a young American economist has in hand an even more complete history of the industry. That an Englishman should be moved to do anything of the kind is perhaps beyond praying for; but it is some comfort to learn that all three have received encouragement and assistance in their work from the Director of the London School of Economics.

The two treatises now before us are very different in their character, and supplement one another; and both together can be regarded as furnishing no more than a preliminary survey of the external history of the manufacture. Dr. Lohmann limits himself in the main to a review of the legislation upon the subject down to the middle of the eighteenth century: and, of course, without penetrating beneath the legislation into the life of the industry itself, it is quite impossible to answer the question, to which he more than once refers, as to whether governmental action forwarded or retarded industrial progress. But he has also looked into the State Papers for certain parts of his period, and he has been able on two or three points to make real additions to our knowledge of the subject, especially during the seventeenth century. I would call attention especially to the information now furnished us as to the proceedings of the various Commissions and Commissioners of Enquiry in the early Stuart reigns. And of the legislation itself Dr. Lohmann's survey is carefully done; it helps to bridge the gulf between the Revolution and the Great Inventions; and it will be very handy for any student of the subject.

Dr. Dechesne's work is more complete; it reaches down to our own time, although the earlier historical part is thin and based on a few modern treatises; and it has called for more protracted labour on the part of its author. Its value is increased by its careful analysis of the various processes involved in the manufacture: by the clear distinction which it maintains between the woollen and the worsted branches of the trade; and by the convenient arrangement of the statistical tables interspersed through its pages. Thanks to his German training, Dr. Dechesne does not limit himself to generalities about manufacturing enterprise, but tells us something of the internal organisation of the Yorkshire business world, though not so much as we could desire; and, thanks to the French influences he has been under, especially that of the school of Le Play, he gives a good deal of attention to the workman's standard of comfort, and furnishes us with an interesting "budget." He notices, without adequately explaining, the weakness of trade unionism in the Yorkshire woollen industry, which is

the more remarkable when contrasted with the complete organisation of the workpeople in the sister textile industry of Lancashire a few miles off; and he could doubtless have obtained more information, had he sought for it, concerning the Wages Scale drawn up by the Bradford Chamber of Commerce in 1895. As far as it goes, Dr. Dechesne's is a very helpful book.

W. J. ASHLEY

Die öffentlichen Glückspiele. By Dr. RUDOLF SIEGHART.
(Vienna. Manz. 1899.)

DR. SIEGHART has spared himself no pains in order to compile a work upon State lotteries which shall be learned and interesting. Those who wish to know what are the different kinds of state lotteries which have existed and which now exist in the various States of Europe can gratify their desire by turning to the pages of this book. To the economist the first chapter will be the most interesting. In this chapter the development of State lotteries in Austria as a result of the Mercantile Theory is traced. The lotteries would draw gold into the country and would prevent the inhabitants from sending the gold out, if they bought lottery tickets instead of foreign goods. The story as told by Dr. Seighart is extremely interesting. The need for a new source of State revenue added an additional reason for the development or the encouragement of lotteries by the State. The variety of their forms is amazing. The evils which resulted from them were great; yet they continued to flourish, and still to this day continue to flourish, in many countries. What is the reason for this? Why do persons gamble in this way? If not in this way then will they in some other? Have we in England done well to prohibit lotteries? The matter is doubtful. In our author's view hope does not spring eternal in the human breast, but the need for hope does. The main functions of many, if not most, forms of gambling is to satisfy this need. If we prohibit lotteries is there not a probability that this need will be satisfied in a less satisfactory way? Dr. Seighart's judgment is interesting—"Frankreich hat die kleine Lotterie beseitigt, aber nur um auf dem Umwege über Panama lose und ähnliche Werte ein viel verderblicheres Spiel ins Volksleben einzuführen. Und ebenso hat England das Zahlenlotto aufgehoben, aber nur um auf der andern Seite durch bookmakers und booms manchen viel gefährlicheren Hoffnungsrausch in umso grösserer Ausdehnung um sich greifen zu sehen."

It is dangerous to encourage lotteries, they are uneconomic and tend to destroy the impulse to save; yet it may be wise to afford a regular means of satisfying the desire for gambling. This book illustrates both these propositions in every variety of way. The general reader who has not time or inclination to read over 400 pages in a foreign tongue, may yet derive considerable advantage from reading the earlier portion of this book.

C. P. SANGER